

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ILO ACTIVITIES IN VENEZUELA

REF: STATE 203991, STATE 225682

SUMMARY. AS OF OCTOBER 1, 1976 THE ILO WILL HAVE NO PROJECTS UNDERWAY IN VENEZUELA. VENEZUELA PARTICIPATES IN SUCH REGIONAL ILO PROJECTS AS CIAT AND CENTERFOR. FUTURE ILO PROJECTS IN VENEZUELA MAY INVOLVE INCE, SIDOR, AND CORPATOURISMO AND WILL CONCENTRATE ON SKILLS TRAINING. PAST ILO PROJECTS HAVE FREQUENTLY FAILED TO REACH THEIR OBJECTIVES DUE TO SHORT FALLS WITHIN THE GOV. ON BALANCE THE ILO HAS DONE A COMPETENT JOB IN VENEZUELA AND IS AN ORGANIZATION VALUED BY THE GOV. END SUMMARY.

1. AT THIS TIME ILO ACTIVITIES IN VENEZUELA ARE LIMITED TO A SINGLE EXPERT WHO IS ASSIGNED TO THE PLANNING MINISTRY (CORDIPLAN) WORKING ON A SMALL VENEZUELAN FOLLOW ON TO THE RECENTLY COMPLETED ILO REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECT (PREALC). THIS FOLLOW ON WILL END SEPTEMBER 30, 1976. AS OF OCTOBER 1, 1976 THE ILO WILL HAVE NO ONGOING ACTIVITIES OR RESIDENT EMPLOYEES IN VENEZUELA. HIGH LEVEL ILO VISITORS SELDOM IF EVER COME TO VENEZUELA BUT NO ONE SEEMS TO MISS THEM.

2. VENEZUELA IS AN ENTHUSIASTIC PARTICIPANT IN SUCH REGIONAL

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ILO ACTIVITIES AS THE INTERAMERICAN CENTER OF LABOR ADMINISTRATION

(CIAT) IN LIMA AND CENTERFOR IN MONTEVIDEO. THE GOV HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY PLEASED WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CIAT WHICH SENDS NUMEROUS EXPERTS TO VENEZUELA FOR SHORT VISITS DURING WHICH THEY DEAL WITH A CLEARLY DEFINED PROBLEM OR PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING. APPROXIMATELY SIX OF THESE EXPERTS HAVE VISITED OR ARE SCHEDULED TO VISIT VENEZUELA DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS OF 1976. THESE EXPERTS HAVE ENGAGED IN SUCH ACTIVITIES AS LECTURING AT A CONFERENCE OF LABOR INSPECTORS AND ASSISTING THE UNIVERSITY OF CARABOBO IN STRENGTHENING ITS GRADUATE PROGRAM IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS. CIAT'S RECENT MEETING IN SANTA CRUZ, BOLIVIA WAS DESCRIBED BY DRA. ZORAIDA DEFFENDINI, HEAD OF THE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICE OF THE LABOR MINISTRY AS "USEFUL, A GOOD PROGRAM." SHE WENT ON TO OBSERVE THAT WHILE MANY COMPLAIN ABOUT CIAT AT ITS MEETINGS, CIAT DOES HAVE AN EFFECTIVE ONGOING PROGRAM EVEN IF IT FAILS TO BE ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE. THE REPORTING OFFICER FOUND THESE SAME ATTITUDES REFLECTED BY DELEGATES FROM A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES AT THE 1975 CIAT MEETING HELD IN CARACAS.

3. THE UNDP OFFICE IN CARACAS REPORTS THAT THE ILO WILL PROBABLY BE THE EXECUTING AGENCY FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE GOV MANPOWER TRAINING INSTITUTE (INCE), THE STATE OWNED SIDOR STEEL MILL, AND THE STATE TOURIST PROMOTION CORPORATION (CORPTURISMO) DURING THE TIME FRAME OF THE RECENTLY ANNOUNCED VENEZUELAN FIVE YEAR PLAN. ALL OF THESE PROJECTS ARE IN THE VERY EARLY TALKING STAGE WITH CORDIPLAN. ALL WOULD BE AIMED AT ALLEVIATING THE TREMENDOUS SHORTAGE OF SKILLED WORKERS IN VENEZUELA BY ASSISTING IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS. IF THESE PROJECTS DO MATERIALIZE THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES WOULD BE COMPLETELY APPROPRIATE FOR THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF VENEZUELA. THE SHORTAGE OF SKILLED WORKERS IN THE MOST SERIOUS ECONOMIC BOTTLENECK IN VENEZUELA TODAY. ALMOST ALL UNEMPLOYMENT IS STRUCTURAL. THE UNSKILLED ARE UNEMPLOYED WHILE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF POSITIONS FOR SKILLED WORKERS GO UNFILLED FOR LACK OF QUALIFIED CANDIDATES.

4. ILO PROJECTS CONDUCTED IN VENEZUELA IN THE RECENT PAST HAVE ENJOYED MIXED SUCCESS. THE EXPERT IN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (ILO PROJECT NO. VEN 72001) SPENT FOUR LONG YEARS IN CARACAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DRAWING UP A DETAILED CURRICULUM FOR A VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SCHOOL AND SUPERVISING THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN APPROPRIATE BUILDING. UNFORTUNATELY THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE SCHOOL IS TO BE OPERATED BY THE SOCIAL SECURITY INSTITUTE (IVSS) OR THE DIRECCION DE PREVISION SOCIAL IN THE LABOR MINISTRY REMAINS UNRESOLVED AND THE SCHOOL HAS YET TO ENROLL ITS FIRST PUPIL. THE EXPERT, A WELL QUALIFIED AND DEDICATED ARGENTINE, COMPLAINED BITTERLY TO THE REPORTING OFFICER ABOUT THIS STATE

OF AFFAIRS AND ADMITTED HIS OWN INABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE FURIOUS POLITICAL INFIGHTING OVER CONTROL OF THE SCHOOL. THE FAILURE OF THIS PROJECT MUST BE LAID TO THE GOV, NOT THE ILO. B) THE GRAPHIC ARTS PROJECT (ILO PROJECT NO. VEN 72-008) ALSO FAILED AFTER A PROMISING START. THIS PROJECT WAS CONDUCTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH INCE AND ALSO INVOLVED FRANCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. THE GRAPHIC ARTS TRAINING FACILITY IS CURRENTLY CLOSED BY A LABOR DISPUTE. INSTRUCTORS REFUSE TO WORK AT LESS THAN THE MARKET RATE FOR THEIR SKILLS. OTHER INCE INSTRUCTORS IN OTHER FIELD INSIST THAT ALL INCE INSTRUCTORS RECEIVE THE SAME PAY. THE INCE INSTRUCTOR WAGE IS LOWER THAN THE GOING WAGE FOR A GRAPHIC ARTS EXPERT. THE RESULT IS NO INSTRUCTORS AND NO SCHOOL. THE FEDERATION OF GRAPHIC ARTS WORKERS AND THE EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION ARE STUDYING THE POSSIBILITY OF TAKING OVER THE SCHOOL AND OPERATING IT OUTSIDE THE INCE SYSTE. AGAIN THE ILO CAN NOT BE BLAMED FOR THE FAILURE OF THE PROJECT. C) THE DESARROLLO Y MEJORAMIENTO DE LA COMERCIALIZACION DE BIENES DE CONSUMO (ILO PROJECT NO VEN 72-007) WAS DESIGNED TO HELP SUPERMARKET OWNERS AND MANAGERS TO MANAGE THEIR STORES MORE EFFICIENTLY. TO THE BEST OF THE EMBASSY'S KNOWLEDGE IT WAS A SUCCESS.

5. IN SUM THE ILO HAS HAD SOME SUCCESSES AND SOME FAILURES IN VENEZUELA. NONE OF THE RECENT FAILURES CAN BE LAID TO ILO MISMANAGEMENT. THE UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE STATES HE HAS AN EXCELLENT WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ILO WHICH ALWAYS COORDINATES ITS ACTIVITIES WITH HIM (HE ADDED THAT THE ILO WAS ONE OF THE FEW ORGANIZATIONS HE COULD SAY THAT ABOUT). THE LABOR MINISTRY IS HAPPY WITH CIAT AND RECOGNIZES THAT UNSUCCESSFUL ILO PROJECTS HAVE BEEN THE FAULT OF THE GOV, NOT THE ILO. VAKY

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